

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-14

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SUBJECT: ROK REACTION TO MARCH 25 HO TAM PROPOSAL

1. ROK MINISTER OF CULTURE AND INFORMATION YUN CHU-YONG EVENING OF MARCH 25 MADE OFFICIAL STATEMENT IN REACTION TO NORTH KOREAN FONMIN HO TAM'S PROPOSAL EARLIER IN DAY THAT NORTH KOREA AND U.S. SIGN A PEACE AGREEMENT. CALLING THE PROPOSAL A PREPOSTEROUS GESTURE, YUN TOLAD A NEWS CONFERENCE THAT NORTH KOREAN MOVE EXPOSED PYONGYANG'S GOAL OF UNIFICATION BY FORCE FOLLOWING WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. TROOPS. HE CITED INCREASE IN NORTH'S 1974 DEFENSE EXPENDITURES, STRENGTHENING OF NORTH KOREAN TROOPS ON DMZ. NORTH KOREAN PROVOCATIONS, AND PYONGYANG'S DISRUPTION OF SOUTH-NORTH DIALOGUE AS EVIDENCE OF NORTH'S AGGRESSIVE INTENTIONS.

2. YUN SAID THAT IF PYONGYANG REALLY HOPES FOR PEACE, IT SHOULD HONOR THE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT AND THE JULY 4 JOINT COMMUNIQUE, SHOULD DEMONSTRATE SINCERITY IN THE DIALOGUE IN KEEPING WITH THE RESOLUTION OF THE 28TH UNGA, AND SHOULD ACCEPT ROK PROPOSAL FOR A NON-AGGRESSION PACT.

3. ROK PRESS HAS GIVEN HEAVY COVERAGE BOTH TO YUN'S REMARKS AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO DEPARTMENT'S SPOKESMAN'S COMMENTS. UNDER HEADLINES SUCH AS QTE

U.S. REJECTS NORTH KOREAN PROPOSAL UNQTE, PRESS HAS PROMINENTLY REPORTED THAT DEPARTMENT'S INITIAL RESPONSE WAS NEGATIVE AND THAT SPOKESMAN HAD STRESSED THAT KOREAN QUESTION SHOULD BE SETTLED BETWEEN SOUTH AND NORTH. STORIES HAVE ALSO INCLUDED MAIN POINTS OF HO TAM PROPOSAL AS CARRIED BY WIRE SERVICES.

4. COMMENT: MOFA HAS INDICATED TO EMBASSY ITS APPRECIATION OF DEPARTMENT HANDLING OF PRESS QUESTIONS ON NORTH KOREAN PEACE AGREEMENT PROPOSAL.

HABIB

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